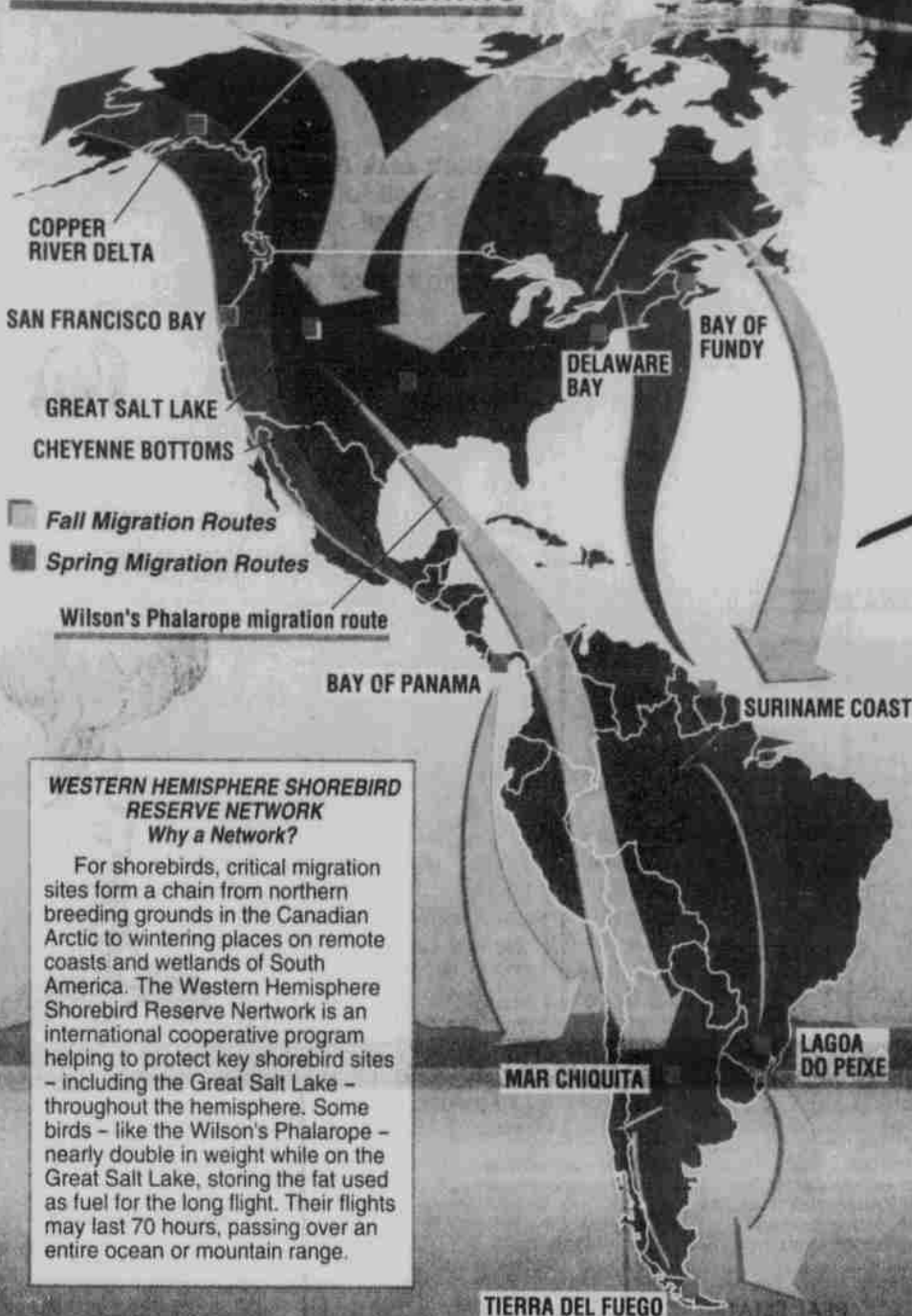


**MAJOR SHOREBIRD MIGRATION
ROUTES & IMPORTANT HABITATS**



**SHOREBIRDS
OF THE GREAT SALT LAKE**

SHOREBIRDS NEED PROTECTION

Eighty kinds of shorebirds are found in the Western Hemisphere. These include Great Salt Lake visitors like the black-necked stilt, avocet, killdeer and long-billed curlew. Many undertake extraordinary migrations with some birds traveling up to 2,000 miles. If habitat like the marshes surrounding the Great Salt Lake were developed or lost, the survival of some species could be threatened.

WILSON'S PHALAROPE

DESCRIPTION: Found near the shore of the Great Salt Lake by the thousands in July, this 9-inch-long bird relies on brine flies as its principle source of food. The female phalarope, with a dark-black line running through its eye and down its neck, is more brightly colored than the male. The bird's crown and back of its neck are silver. A cinnamon color wash down the back gives the phalarope a distinctive look. Its black legs turn green during winter. It has a long needlelike bill and white underparts.

CALL: A low, nasal cheek, cheek, cheek.

RANGE: West and southeast United States to Mar Chiquita in Argentina.

HABITAT: Shallow prairie lakes, freshwater marshes, pools, shores and mud flats.



SOME GREAT SALT LAKE SHOREBIRDS

Greater Yellowlegs
Lesser Yellowlegs
Willet
Marbled Godwit
Western Sandpiper
Least Sandpiper
Common Snipe
Red Knot
Northern Phalarope
Snowy Plover
Black-bellied Plover
Spotted Sandpiper
Solitary Sandpiper
Long-billed Dowitcher
Baird's Sandpiper
Semipalmated Sandpiper
Semipalmated Plover
Stilt Sandpiper
Sanderling
Lesser Golden Plover
Pectoral Sandpiper



AVOCET

DESCRIPTION: When in breeding plumage, this 18-inch-long bird's head turns an orange-tan color. Its body is boldly black and white, and it has a long neck and a thin up-turned bill.

CALL: A sharp, piercing "wheet"-sounding song.

RANGE: Southwest Canada and western United States.

HABITAT: Shallow lake shores, marshes and prairie ponds.



KILLDEER

DESCRIPTION: One of the most common of all shorebirds, this 10-inch-long visitor to the Great Salt Lake often can be seen running across mud flats. Its upper body is brown with orange on the tail; its breast and belly are white. It has two black neck bands, a short bill and bright red eye-rings.

CALL: Distinctive killdeer sound, with a repeated "dee,dee,dee."

RANGE: Southern Alaska and Canada to the western United States. Bird winters from central Mexico to coastal Peru.

HABITAT: Widespread in fields, lawns, river banks, mud flats, gravel beds and shoreline areas.



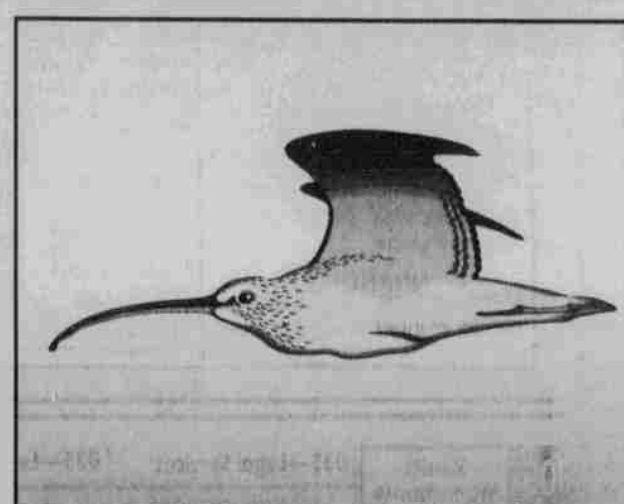
BLACK-NECKED STILT

DESCRIPTION: Found on mud flats and marshes at the edge of the Great Salt Lake, this 15-inch-long bird is black on top and white on the throat, breast and belly. It has a needlelike, straight black bill, and long pinkish-red legs. The eyes are dark red. It must bend its legs in order to reach the ground with its bill.

CALL: A yelping "keep, keep, keep."

RANGE: West and southeast United States to Argentina. It winters from the southern coast of Oregon, the Gulf Coast, and southern Florida south.

HABITAT: Grassy marshes, mud flats, pools, shallow lakes, freshwater areas and alkaline flats.



LONG-BILLED CURLEW

DESCRIPTION: This 23-inch-long bird inhabits the grassy uplands near the marshes. The curlew is easily identified by its long, sickle-shaped downcurved bill, which when fully developed in adults, can be almost as long as the bird's body, and longer than most other shorebirds. It has an overall speckled, buffy color with long legs and cinnamon wing linings. It is the largest of the shorebirds.

CALL: A distinctive "curlee" sound with a rising inflection, often repeated 3 to 4 times; and a loud "wit-wit, wit-wit."

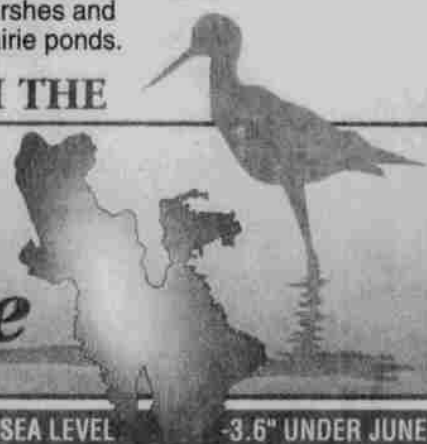
RANGE: Southwest Canada and western United States. Winters in southern United States to Guatemala.

HABITAT: Rangelands and upland regions. In winter, it likes cultivated land, tide flats, beaches and salt marshes.

Mark Knudsen / The Salt Lake Tribune

A YEAR WITH THE

Great Salt Lake



JULY LEVEL: 4201.2 ABOVE SEA LEVEL

-3.6" UNDER JUNE

**Mountain Chickadee's Call
Intrigues Novice Birders**



Mark Knudsen/The Salt Lake Tribune
Mountain Chickadee

Even before Dr. Harold Anstall, pathologist at the University Hospital, uttered a word, I somehow sensed he had a bird question.

Perhaps it was the sudden momentary catch in his familiar gait as he rounded the corner, of the shift of his eyes and slight hesitation before he spoke, all so characteristically different than his usual confident manner.

"I've been hearing a bird around my house," he ventured. "and I wondered if you could help me identify it."

He deeply inhaled then transformed that breath into a two-toned whistle, pee beee, clear and sweet, the last note lower than the first.

My mind wandered back many years to a time when I, as a beginning birder, had also

■ See C-7, Column 1

Flies Draw Shorebirds to Great Salt Lake

By Tom Wharton
THE SALT LAKE TRIBUNE

Goosey black mud and hordes of swarming brine flies may keep locals away from the Great Salt Lake, but the ooze and insects attract between two and five million shorebirds annually.

On a single July day, biologists have counted as many as 600,000 Wilson's phalaropes on the Layton marsh.

Heat waves coming off the lake's surface give distant Salt Lake City a surrealistic look as thousands of phalaropes rise off the horizon. Like a cloud of giant bees, the birds sweep across the sky then softly land on the shallow water. Another group gets up, then another, and another.

These small shorebirds — with long, thin bills and bold, blackish stripes — double their weight by eating brine flies for 30 to 45 days.

"The birds get so fat that, at times, they can't fly," says Joseph Jehl, the director of the Hubbs-Sea World Research Institute and the world's foremost expert on shorebirds. "You can catch them by hand. Some can barely get off the water."

"They look like they'd have difficulty flying 100 yards. Yet these same birds are going to be able to fly 3,000 miles in 60 hours nonstop to South America."

Nearby, hundreds of avocets shriek at human intruders who come within 15 feet of the busy birds. The avocets move their bills back and forth in the shallow water, stirring up insects to eat. As a flock of long-billed dowitchers flies overhead, marbled godwits preen themselves on a nearby sandbar.

Just why is all this fowl found at Great Salt

Lake?

"It's like a giant gas station for birds," explains Gonzalo Castro, the executive director of the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network in Manomet, Mass. "The Great Salt Lake is a unique place in the western hemisphere because large concentrations of birds visit there."

Castro's organization, formed in 1985 and made up of government and private agencies committed to shorebird conservation, has designated the Great Salt Lake as one of 19 sites of hemispheric importance. These places host 30 million shorebirds annually.

"The importance of the Great Salt Lake is that it is one of the few large permanent salt lakes in North America," says Jehl. "It is a reliable body of water for these birds to visit year after year. If it were to go dry, where would they go? How would they find enough energy for their migration?"

Between two and five million shorebirds representing 36 different species visit the Great Salt Lake each year. The lake is most important, however, for Wilson's and red-necked phalaropes. Jehl says about 50 percent of the world population of Wilson's and 10 percent of red-necked phalaropes stop on the lake.

Hatched in the prairie pothole country of southern Canada and the northern United States plains, up to a million Wilson's phalaropes visit the Great Salt Lake from mid-June to early August.

After feasting on flies, completely replacing their feathers and resting on the Great Salt Lake, hundreds of thousands of phalaropes fly almost nonstop to Laguna del Mar Chiquita in

Dedication Ceremony Saturday

The Great Salt Lake will be formally dedicated as part of the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network in a ceremony at Farmington Bay Saturday at 9 a.m. In addition to speeches by invited guests, field trips to see shore birds and light refreshments will be available.

The free Great Salt Lake Lecture Series continues this week at the University of Utah Fine Arts Auditorium. Wildlife biologist Don Paul and bird expert Ella Sorensen will speak on the lake's shorebirds Wednesday. Joseph Jehl, director of Research for the Hubbs-Sea World Research Institute, will talk about birds of salty seas around the world Friday at 7 p.m. The talks are free.

For the best opportunity to view large numbers of shorebirds, including Wilson's phalaropes, visit the Great Salt Lake from mid-June through August. Sites along the eastern shore offer the greatest concentrations of phalaropes, especially in late July and early August.

Suggested areas include Bear River Bird Refuge, Harold Crane Waterfowl Management Area, Ogden Bay, Howard Slough, West Layton Marsh and the eastern side of the Antelope Island Causeway.

Argentina. Along with other shorebirds, more than 500,000 Wilson's phalaropes winter on Laguna del Mar Chiquita. It and the Great Salt

■ See C-6, Column 2